IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly replace the claims of record with the following full set of claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of motion-compensated predictive image encoding, comprising the steps of:

estimating (ME) first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) associated with a set of ~~for the~~ first objects of a fixed size ~~(16*16)~~, said motion vectors MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb being associated with first objects adjacent to a first object associated with the MVc motion vector;

filtering (MVPF) every occurrence of said first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) to obtain second motion vectors (MV1, MV2, MV3, MV4) for second objects having a fixed size ~~(8*8), said second objects (8*8) being~~ smaller than said first objects fixed size ~~(16*16)~~;

generating (3) prediction errors in dependence on said second motion vectors (MV1, MV2, MV3, MV4) only; and

combining (VLC) said first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) and said prediction errors.

2. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said first objects ~~(16*16)~~ are macro-blocks having a fixed size of (16*16) pixels, said second objects ~~(8*8)~~ are blocks having a fixed size of (8*8) pixels and said filtering step (MVPF) comprises the steps of:

providing x and y motion vectors components of a given macro-block (MVc) and of macro-block (MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) adjacent to said given macro-block (Mvc); and

supplying for each block (MV1) of a number of blocks (MV1-MV4) corresponding to said given macro-block (MVc), x and y motion vector components respectively selected from said x and y motion vector components of said given macro-block (MVc) and from the x and y motion vector components of two blocks (MV*l*, MVa) adjacent to said block (MV1).

3 (Currently amended) A device for motion-compensated predictive image encoding comprising:

means for ~~estimating (ME) first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) for first objects (16*16)~~ estimating (ME) first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) associated with a set of ~~for the~~ first objects of a fixed size ~~(16*16)~~, said motion vectors MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb being associated with first objects adjacent to a first object associated with the MVc motion vector;

means for filtering (MVPF) every occurrence of said first motion vectors (MVc, MV1, MVr, MVa, MVb) to obtain second motion vectors (MV1, MV2, MV3, MV4) for second objects having a fixed size ~~(8*8), said second objects (8*8) being~~ smaller than said first objects fixed size ~~(16*16)~~;

means for generating (3) prediction errors in dependence on said second motion vectors (MV1, MV2, MV3, MV4) only; and

means for combining (VLC) said first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) and said prediction errors.

4. (Currently amended) A method of motion-compensated predictive decoding, comprising the steps of:

generating (VLC^{-1}) first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) and prediction errors from an input bit-stream, said first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) relating to first objects of a fixed size ~~(16*16)~~, and said motion vectors MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb being associated with first objects adjacent to a first object associated with the MVc motion vector, and said prediction errors related to second objects having a fixed size ~~(8*8),~~ smaller than said first objects fixed size only;

filtering (MVPF) every occurrence of said first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) to obtain second motion vectors (MV1, MV2, MV3, MV4) for said second objects ~~(8*8) said second objects (8*8) being smaller than said first objects (16*16)~~; and generating (15, MC) an output signal in dependence on said prediction errors and said second motion vectors (MV1, MV2, MV3, MV4).

5. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 4, wherein said first objects ~~(16*16)~~ are macro-blocks having a fixed size of (16*16) pixels, said second objects ~~(8*8)~~ are blocks having a fixed size of (8*8) pixels, and said filtering step (MVPF) comprises the steps of:

providing x and y motion vectors components of a given macro-block (MVc) and of macro-block (MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) adjacent to said given macro-block (Mvc); and supplying for each block (MV1) of a number of blocks (MV1-MV4) corresponding to said given macro-block (MVc), x and y motion vector components respectively selected from said x and y motion vector components of said given macro-block (MVc) and from

the x and y motion vector components of two blocks (MV1, MVa) adjacent to said block (MV1).

6. (Currently amended) A device for motion-compensated predictive decoding, comprising:

means for generating (VLC^{-1}) first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) and prediction errors from an input bit-stream, said first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) relating to first objects of a fixed size ~~(16*16)~~, said motion vectors MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb being associated with first objects adjacent to a first object associated with the MVc motion vector, and said prediction errors related to second objects (8*8) only;

means for filtering (MVPF) every occurrence of said first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) to obtain second motion vectors (MV1, MV2, MV3, MV4) for said second objects having a fixed size ~~(8*8), said second objects (8*8) being~~ smaller than said first objects fixed size ~~(16*16)~~; and

means for generating (15, MC) an output signal in dependence on said prediction errors and said second motion vectors (MV1, MV2, MV3, MV4).

7. (Previously presented) A multi-media apparatus, comprising:

means (T) for receiving a motion-compensated predictively encoded image signal; and

a motion-compensated predictive decoding device as claimed in claim 6 for generating a decoded image signal.

8. (Previously presented) An image signal display apparatus comprising:

means (T) for receiving a motion-compensated predictively encoded image signal;

a motion-compensated predictive decoding device as claimed in claim 6 for generating a decoded image signal; and

means (D) for displaying said decoded image signal.

9. (Currently amended) A method for generating a motion-compensated predictively encoded image signal, comprising:

estimating first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) related to first objects of size (16*16) pixels; obtaining second motion vectors (MV*l*, MV2, MV3, MV4) for second objects of size (8*8) pixels from said first motion vectors (MVc, MV*l*, MVr, MVa, MVb) and generating prediction errors relating to every occurrence of second objects ~~(8*8), said second objects (8*8) being smaller than said first objects (16*16),~~ wherein said prediction errors depend on said second motion vectors (MV1, MV2, MV3, MV4) only.